

16 January 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Members of NIO Office

SUBJECT : Security

1. Attached is a memorandum on intelligence leaks which the Director has sent to the USIB principals. The object of this note is to ask each of you to read the DCI's memorandum carefully and think about its implications for us and our activities.

2. Every person in this office has been hand picked. Your abilities speak for themselves. The Director has complete confidence in the professionalism and discretion of each and every one of you (as, of course, do I). Nonetheless, it is important to remind ourselves from time to time that we have security responsibilities which, in some senses, are perhaps greater than those of any other office in this building except that of the Director himself.

3. Each NIO - which obviously also means each NIO's assistant and secretary - will know virtually everything the DCI knows with respect to that NIO's particular geographic or functional area of responsibility and will see much, indeed most, of the material on this area that flows across the DCI's desk. The people who work directly with me, those who perform the vital function of sorting, handling and routing all of our mail, and those who work with [redacted] in processing our collective output and the DCI's briefs on virtually all subjects, will get an even broader slice of information than the individual NIO and their immediate associates. Because of the depth of knowledge each individual in this office will inevitably acquire in the performance of his or her duties, and because humans are human, it will become very easy to forget just how sensitive much of the material that flows across our desks or arises in our office discussions actually is.

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3. In the conduct of our duties, all of us will have to be on guard against two continuing risks. The first is the obvious one of inadvertent disclosure, e.g., forgetting how sensitive particular substantive, or operational, matters actually are when discussing the general subjects to which they relate with professional colleagues in other offices or in social discourse with other Agency or governmental personnel (plus, of course, persons outside the official fold). The second risk relates to a delicate matter whose existence is nonetheless a fact of life in today's climate: namely the problem of intentional but unauthorized disclosure.

4. Naturally, I devoutly hope the latter problem will never arise in our office. We all have to recognize, however, that many of the topics and issues with which all of us will be dealing will be ones of major importance to the Agency, to the intelligence community, to other components of our government, and to the country of which we are all citizens. Many of these issues will also be controversial and the most important ones are apt to be the most controversial. We will not always agree among ourselves about the judgments of various colleagues (inside and outside of our office) on these issues. In some cases, perhaps many, we may have personal and individual reservations (perhaps very strong ones) about the wisdom or soundness of the policy decisions made with respect to such issues. None of us should have any reticence about expressing such thoughts or opinions, in proper ways and within -- but only within -- appropriate circles.

5. The DCI welcomes diversity of individual opinions and strongly encourages the vigorous presentation of informal personal views, whether or not they agree with any official line or the judgments of others, working in the same area. I feel as strongly as he about the essentiality of personal candor and vigorous debate. Nonetheless, we all have an obligation to remember -- at all times -- that the information to which we gain access in the course of our official duties, directly or indirectly, is given to us in trust and held by us in trust. None of us has a personal right to decide that higher interests, of any kind, warrant a violation of that trust.

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6. Inadvertent disclosure can, and must be, prevented by personal discipline, professionalism and conscious vigilance by all of us. In the other sphere, the discharge of a trust is, ultimately, a matter of professional and personal conscience. If any of you, at any time, find your professional or personal consciences troubled in any way by any aspect of your official duties, I ask you to voice your concerns to me, frankly and privately, or let me arrange for you to discuss them privately with the DCI. Both Mr. Colby and I respect the sanctity and inviolate integrity of the conscience of every individual in this office. Each and every one of us, however, has an obligation to respect the sanctity of the trust that has been placed in us all.



George A. Carver, Jr.
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

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Attachment

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

4 January 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR USIB PRINCIPALS

SUBJECT: Intelligence Leaks

1. In recent weeks there have been a number of instances in which highly classified material has appeared in the press. In some situations these reflected a conscious release of information about world developments by senior officials of our Government. Such cases are quite appropriate in view of the necessity to inform the American people of developments in conformity with our American constitutional structure.

2. In some instances, however, the revelations have gone into detail as to intelligence sources and methods well beyond senior officials' releases and have apparently originated from independent release of the information without authorization. While it is clear that information will and must be made available to the public by authorized levels of the U.S. Government, it is equally important that the Intelligence Community take steps to protect sensitive intelligence sources and methods. Such unauthorized revelations can:

a. Threaten the safety and welfare of individuals who may be providing us intelligence at a substantial personal risk.

b. Permit the identification of our sources and their consequent termination.

c. Lead other nations to make substantial changes in procedures which terminate our access to information now being collected.

d. Produce substantial diplomatic and political difficulties in our foreign relations.

3. A number of actions have been taken to close this gap in the security of the Intelligence Community. Personal representation by previous Directors backed by strong expressions of Presidential concern have been made. You have established security guides which, if scrupulously followed, should reduce the number of inadvertent disclosures and limit damage from deliberate leaks. These actions have had some success, but in the final analysis the solution to the leak problem rests with the individuals at all levels who have authorized access to classified materials.

4. The responsibility for protection of foreign intelligence sources and methods requires a personal commitment. It requires the individual to take upon himself the responsibility to ensure the integrity of the privileged information with which he is entrusted. It requires that the individual accept the general and fundamental concept that one individual cannot assume responsibility independent of proper authority for deciding what should and what should not be revealed. It requires use of established procedures when release of intelligence seems indicated for whatever reason.

5. I ask the Members of the Board to make these comments known to all individuals with access to our intelligence materials. I also request that you remind them of the guidelines and procedures to be followed for the authorized release of intelligence and encourage their full utilization.



W. E. Colby
Director of Central Intelligence